

First record of Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis* for Togo

Sharon Merz^a, Johannes Merz^a and Deborah H. Hatfield^b

Première mention du Gobemouche à collier *Ficedula albicollis* pour le Togo. Le 22 avril 2006, un Gobemouche à collier *Ficedula albicollis* a été observé près des rapides de la Kara, à l'est du village de Landa-Pozanda, au nord du Togo (09°31'N 01°17'E). Il s'agissait d'un mâle en plumage nuptial et ceci constitue la première donnée pour le pays.

On 22 April 2006, we paid an early-morning visit to the Kara River rapids east of the village of Landa-Pozanda in northern Togo (09°31'N 01°17'E). Around 07.45 hrs, having left the immediate vicinity of the river, whilst traversing the wooded Guinea Savanna typical of the area, SM spotted a small black-and-white flycatcher perched low in an almost leafless tree c.20 m distant. We watched it for several minutes through binoculars in excellent light, with the sun behind us. Initially the bird perched facing away from us, then, before flying off north, it turned permitting good views of the head pattern.

Locally common species, such as Brown-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*, Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis* and Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis*, all familiar to us, were eliminated immediately. The bird resembled a Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*, a common Palearctic migrant which SM and JM have observed regularly in similar habitat in northern Benin, both during the dry season, in November–February, and during autumn and spring passages. However, it differed from the latter in having a distinct white forehead patch, a white lower back and an unbroken white collar on the hindneck. The latter is a diagnostic feature of adult male Collared Flycatcher *F. albicollis* (Svensson *et al.* 1999). Pied Flycatcher lacks this collar and also has a less striking forehead patch. Semi-collared Flycatcher *F. semitorquata* only possesses a half-collar and winters in East Africa, with no certain records in Western Africa (Borrow & Demey 2001).

Collared Flycatcher winters south of the equator, but its range in Africa is poorly known (Urban *et al.* 1997). In western Africa, the species is a rare to scarce passage migrant, with records from Niger (Aïr), northern Nigeria, Chad, Central African Republic and northern Congo, whilst others from Senegal and Mali are unsubstantiated, and claimed specimens from Ghana have been proven to be misidentified Pied Flycatchers (Urban *et al.* 1997, Borrow & Demey 2001). This record is thus the first for Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1996).

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^aBP 45, Tanguiéta, Republic of Benin. E-mail: Johannes-Sharon_Merz@sil.org

^bBP 1525, Lomé, Togo. E-mail: Debbie_Hatfield@sil.org

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